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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQI MINDEF TELLS CODEL HOEKSTRA THAT 14
PROVINCES CALM, BAGHDAD VIOLENT

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On July 15, Congressmen Pete Hoekstra R-MI), Christopher Shays (R-CT), Gil Gutknecht (R-MN) Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), and Mike Rogers (R-MI) met with the Iraqi MinDef Abd Al-Qader. Al-Qader emphasized that the Iraqi Army (IA) is making great progress in its development despite the very challenging security situation. Echoing comments made recently to other CODELs, Al-Qader stated that an apparent lessening in the terror threat has been replaced by sectarian violence. Al-Qader commented that while the situation appears to be worsening, it is happening primarily in Baghdad and that fourteen of Iraq's eighteen provinces are relatively peaceful. Al-Qader further noted that Iraq was the "front line in the war against terrorism" and it must succeed. He thanked the CODEL for America's support.

¶2. (C) In response to other CODEL questions, Al-Qader identified several areas requiring improvement for the Iraqi military, especially Iraq's inadequate logistic, maintenance, and command/control capacity. He stated that MOD was working closely with MNF-I and MNSTC-I to resolve these issues and that he expected the Iraqi Army to be close to fully mission capable sometime in 2007. Regarding possible impending drawdown of U.S. forces, Al-Qader emphasized that any drawdown should be made based on military capabilities, not political calculations. He stressed that the IA is relatively free from ethno-sectarian tensions and are developing a loyalty to the Iraqi state, especially when compared to the Ministry of Interior police.
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